



**Commonwealth of Kentucky
Kentucky Department of Corrections**

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Corrections sees major increase in inmate GEDs

Frankfort, KY – More inmates than ever before are obtaining their General Equivalency Diploma (GED) as a result of a heightened focus by the Kentucky Department of Corrections.

In the first six months of 2004, 287 inmates earned their GED while incarcerated in a Kentucky prison, compared to 139 in the last six months of 2003. Corrections Commissioner John D. Rees set a goal of improving the program and increasing its numbers shortly after taking over the top job in January.

“I simply knew we could do better,” said Rees. “There’s nothing more important in the overall plan to help an offender reintegrate back into society. One of the primary reasons individuals fail and resort to criminal behavior is a lack of education. Any steps we can take to increase inmates’ educational opportunities are worthwhile.”

Rees implemented a program in which an inmate can receive \$150 for successful completion of the GED program. The bonus is paid out of funds generated from inmate canteens, small convenience-store like operations in the prison at which inmates can purchase such items such as soft drinks, toiletries and tobacco products.

“I am extremely pleased with the effort and professionalism shown by our teachers in accepting this challenge to increase our numbers in the GED program,” said Rees. “

The Department of Corrections’ education program includes both adult basic education and technical courses. The Department contracts by a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). Courses are offered by full-time certified instructors at the 12 state prisons.